



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

Erie man arrested for money laundering, trafficking in contraband cigarettes

ERIE, PA – Mary Beth Buchanan, United States Attorney for the Western District of Pennsylvania, and Richard Boronyak, Resident-Agent-in-Charge for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in Pittsburgh, today announced that a resident of Erie turned himself over to ICE agents to face federal charges of money laundering and trafficking in more than one million contraband cigarettes.

Yesterday, special agents from ICE served a federal arrest warrant on **Abdul Jabbar AlQuraishi**, 39, of 850 East Grandview Boulevard, Erie, PA. AlQuraishi subsequently had his initial court appearance before U.S. Magistrate Judge Susan Baxter, where he was released on a \$5,000 bond, ordered to turn over his passport and report to Pre-Trial Services.

On June 13, 2006, a federal grand jury in Erie returned a 22-count indictment charging AlQuraishi with trafficking in contraband cigarettes, trafficking in counterfeit goods and money laundering. According to the indictment, between 2003 and 2005, AlQuraishi trafficked in more than one million contraband cigarettes bearing no evidence of the payment of Pennsylvania cigarette taxes, and counterfeit Marlboro, Marlboro Lights, Newport Kings and Newport cigarettes. In addition, he was charged with money laundering in connection with the trafficking in contraband and counterfeit cigarettes.

Assistant United States Attorney Marshall J. Piccinini, who presented the case to the grand jury, indicated that the law provides for the maximum total sentence of 35 years in prison, a fine of \$2,750,000 or both. Under the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, the actual sentence imposed would be based upon the seriousness of the offenses and the prior criminal history, if any, of the defendant.

The Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement; the Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation; the U.S. Secret Service; the Department of Agriculture, Office of Inspector General; and the Erie Bureau of Police conducted the investigation leading to the indictment in the case.

An indictment is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. A defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial at which the government must prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.